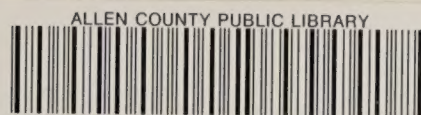


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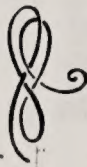
Biography of Captain Charles
Vernon Gridley

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Biography of
CAPTAIN CHARLES VERNON GRIDLEY
done by the students of

GRIDLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Eriz Penna



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We, the undersigned, dedicate this book to
GRIDLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL,
our ALMA MATER

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PREFACE

By JANE PATTAN

"The claims of this volume are humble." Because our school is named in honor of Captain Gridley, we think it particularly fitting for us to write his history. It is obviously impossible to compress between the covers of a little book like this, the entire story of a life so worthwhile, a personality so noble as that of our subject, Captain Charles Vernon Gridley. As a friend he was loved and respected, as an enemy he was feared.

For our information we are indebted to Mrs. Lewis Buddy, his daughter, Rear Admiral G. H. Wadleigh, Mrs. E. F. Lyon, Rear Admiral P. F. Harrington, Lieutenant George M. McClure, Mrs. Hudson, of the Erie Public Library, Miss Helen Stirling, daughter of Admiral Stirling, Admiral Colby M. Chester, and Mrs. Francis Thomas.

Although his brave, determined stand for his country at Manila Bay resulted in the sacrifice of his life at an early age, nevertheless he stands out brilliantly among the famous men of history. It has been our aim to give to the ambitious youth of Erie, and of the whole nation, Gridley's wonderful life as an example to imitate in shaping their own careers.

THE

On the 10th of January 1881, the following was published in the London Standard:

"The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the Government of India for the year 1881."

The names of the persons appointed to the various offices of the Government of India for the year 1881 are as follows:

Secretary to Government: Mr. James F. Stephen.

Under Secretary to Government: Mr. James F. Stephen.

Joint Secretary to Government: Mr. James F. Stephen.

Deputy Secretary to Government: Mr. James F. Stephen.

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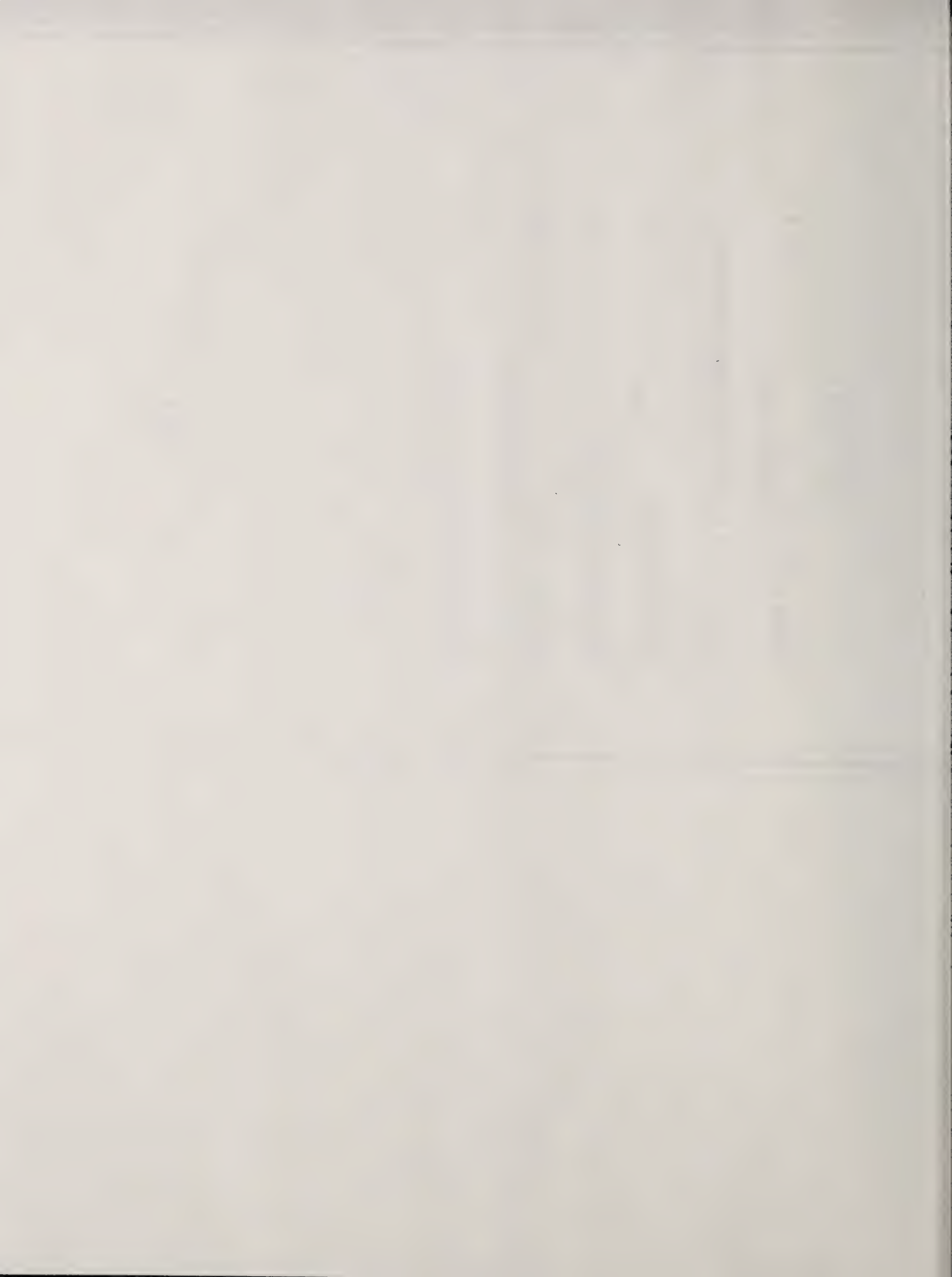
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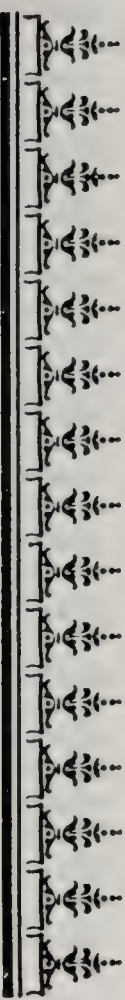
THE

SECRET

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GRIDLEY ~ *His Early Life*

By ROBERT F. BRYAN



HARLES VERNON GRIDLEY was born at Logansport, Indiana, November 24th, 1844. His father was the son of Elisha Gridley, a sturdy old New Englander. He had a younger brother Lucius, and together they had good times hunting, fishing, and playing in the small creek near their home. At the age of twelve, Charles and his family moved to Hillsdale, Michigan. Here he was very active in the Episcopal Church, serving as a vestryman, chancel-server, and in various other ways.

He attended Hillsdale College and here he received from his uncle, Henry Waldon, a Congressman of that district an appointment to attend Annapolis. This was in September 1860, when he was only fourteen years of age. At that time a competitive examination was not given to those appointed to the Academy.

Gridley entered a good class, for later records show that every member of it served as an officer during the Spanish-American War. Miss Helen Stirling, daughter of Admiral Stirling, writes us of her father, "He was a classmate of Gridley and when they went on leave they usually went together.

CAPTAIN CHARLES VERNON GRIDLEY

They were the best of friends. He says Gridley had a lovable personality." Another roommate of Gridley was Robley Evans later known as "Fighting Bob." Strange to say Evans was the only graduate of Annapolis, from the South, who joined the Northern army during the Civil War. Another good friend of Gridley was Lewis Clark, who later became an admiral, and it was he who piloted the famous "Oregon" around the Horn. This class was never formally graduated, for most of the members of it were detached into active service in December, 1863. Otherwise Gridley would have been graduated in 1864.

He was only nineteen when he was sent to join Farragut's fleet in Mobile Bay. At the time he arrived two places on board were vacant. One was that of an officer and the other was of a lower rank. When the captain gave Gridley his choice of these he immediately replied, "I prefer to be ordered." The captain was surprised, but he allowed Gridley to have his own way. Not long afterward the other post was filled.

The following day, while Gridley, (his face covered with sweat and grease) was bravely loading the red hot cannon, a stray bullet killed his commanding officer. This man held the post which Gridley might have chosen only the day before.

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GRIDLEY

His Life After His Term at Annapolis

From the official report of the Navy Department
Bureau of Navigation at Washington, D.C.

By ROBERT GEARHART



CHARLES VERNON GRIDLEY was ordered into active service on October 1, 1863, with the rank of Acting Ensign and was stationed aboard the U.S.S. "Oneida."

Having served on the "Oneida" for approximately two years he was detached and placed on the U.S.S. "Brooklyn," October 3, 1865. He did excellent work and the designation "Acting" was therefore discontinued. His climb to the top was begun, and he was commissioned a Master July 19, 1866. Continuing his good work he was commissioned a Lieutenant March 7, 1867 and December 23 of the same year he was ordered to the U.S.S. "Kearsarge." While serving on the "Kearsarge" he was commissioned a Lieutenant-Commander.

On January 3, 1871 he was attached to the U.S.S. "Michigan" and two years later he was sent to the U.S.S. "Monongahela" as Executive. Returning to the Naval Academy as an instructor, June 22, 1875, he remained there until May 22, 1877 when he was ordered to the U.S.S. "Constellation." Here

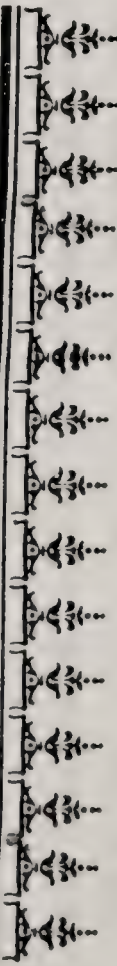
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he stayed for four months and was then sent back to the Academy. After serving at Annapolis for approximately one year he was returned to the "Constellation," where he had but hardly arrived when he was sent to the U.S.S. "Trenton." On January 16, 1882 he became a member of the crew of the "Michigan" and while aboard this ship he was promoted to a Commander. He took the examination for that rank and was then given torpedo instruction.

On September 28, 1882 he became Navigation Officer at the Boston Navy Yard, holding this post for two years, when he was put in command of the U.S.S. "Jamestown." His next ship was the "Twin Screws" "Portsmouth." The office of Assistant Inspector of the Tenth Lighthouse District was bestowed upon him July 1, 1887 and on August 1 of the same year he became Inspector. At the Washington Navy Yard October 1891 he was given Ordnance Instruction and was ordered to be ready for special duty at the Asiatic Station. His sailing orders arrived on May 24, 1892. When he had finished his special duty he was given command of the U.S.S. "Marion." He was appointed a member of a Retiring Board July 21, 1893 and was given two months leave of absence June 22, 1894.

His leave of absence over, he was reappointed Inspector of the Tenth Lighthouse District, retaining this position for two years. Senior Member of the Board of Survey at Detroit was his next title.

At this point another examination was required, and having taken this he was placed in command of the R.S. "Richmond." On March 26, 1897 he was commissioned a Captain, and June 10 was given command of the U.S.S. "Olympia" flagship of the Asiatic Squadron. It was while in command of this ship that he fought under Dewey at Manila Bay. During this engagement Dewey uttered the words that made Gridley famous; "You may fire when you are ready, Captain Gridley." Gridley's fighting this battle while very sick hastened his death. While commanding the "Olympia" he was a member of the Naval Examining Board. Because of the increasing seriousness of his illness he was freed of duty on May 5, 1898. He died at Kobe, Japan, on the steamer "Coptic" while on the way home.



GRIDLEY'S CHARACTER

By JANE ROOF



HE THROBBING OF MOTORS, the occasional shriek of a boat's whistle, the steady hum of activity made the human voice almost inaudible on Brooklyn Bridge.

Making his way through this chaos was a tall, comely man, accompanied by his daughter, Ruth. Suddenly a negro came toward them, wedging his way through the dense crowd. As the negro drew near he said, "Captain Gridley, I sailed with you once; if you are going to sail again please let me know."

He gazed with great admiration on his Captain, who was a stately, square-shouldered man with calm penetrating eyes and an aquiline nose. His disposition was loving and gentle; his commands, however, were very forceful.

Although Gridley was noted for his bravery and heroic deeds, he was very modest. A boy once asked him for some facts concerning a naval battle in which he took an active part. The Captain smiled and said, "Here is a book which gives all the details."

The "U.S.S. Marion" glided swiftly through the glassy waters of the mighty Pacific.

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GRIDLEY'S CHARACTER

"We will reach Yokohama in about four days if nothing unforeseen occurs," said the Captain.

The unforeseen did occur. In mid-afternoon of the next day the sun disappeared behind a mass of dark cumulous clouds, the waters grew turbulent, Jupiter hurled many thunderbolts, a dense mist enveloped the ship. A typhoon was approaching. Sharp commands fell fast on the ears of the laboring seamen.

Crash! the mast fell. The Captain asked for volunteers to fix the broken mast, as he could command no one. One prisoner stepped boldly forward.

"It is a dangerous task, my brave man," said Gridley.

"So I realize, but my life might better be given in some useful service than spent in a prison," replied the courageous prisoner.

"Very well, you may begin at once."

Breathlessly the crew watched the dauntless man climb higher and higher, rocked by the angry sea. Reaching the crippled mast, hanging by his feet and one hand, he slowly repaired the disabled mast.

Twelve long hours were spent in hobbling back to port.

A number of months later Captain Gridley met his former prisoner and was told that because of Gridley's praise of the man's ingenuity in their trying position he had been granted freedom.

On board ship when a man was brought to him

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to be disciplined, Captain Gridley would talk to him like a kind father and thus make the man desire to do right. When a sailor had once served under him, he was always ready to do so again, for Gridley had no enemies.

His character may be summed up in the words of his classmate, Rear Admiral P. F. Harrington. "Gridley had much wit and humor and he was most genial in company and a delight to his friends. Gridley on duty and Gridley off duty were different men, both admirable in their ways."

THE BATTLE OF MANILA BAY

By ROBERT GEARHART



THE AMERICAN FLEET with the flagship "Olympia" leading, in the command of Captain Charles Vernon Gridley, steamed into a position to one side of Admiral Montojo's fleet and then turned and headed for a sailing line exactly parallel to that of Montojo's. For a moment the Spanish commander might have thought that Commodore Dewey had found a fleet too strong for him to give battle to, and that he was now making for the entrance to the bay to escape, but Dewey had a plan of battle and followed it through to the end. The Commodore's plan was this: "The detour to the east was in order to drop the supply ships at a careful distance and then sweep around with sufficient way to have good sailing past the enemy. Each of the ships was to hold her fire until within certain effective range, to pour in every available shot as she passed the enemy's fleet and forts, to wheel as soon as she passed out of effective distance, to steam past the forts and fleet on a return line, (but closer in shore than on the first line of attack); to wheel again as soon as she passed out of effective range, and to keep this up until the enemy was destroyed or recall was floated."



On the way to drop the supply ships and before the actual engagement began, lookouts reported that Admiral Montojo's flag was flying on the cruiser "Reina Cristina," and that the Spanish fleet seemed to be protected by a rough boom of logs. It was evident that the Spaniard thought that the battle would be carried on as a brigade engagement, each man to stand his ground until shot down. Here he was again badly disillusioned, as he was when he tried to interpret the reverse route of our fleet.

The American fleet swung around after dropping the supply ships and began to steam slowly past the Spanish fleet and forts. Suddenly from the direction of Cavite came a spit of flame and a boom, followed almost immediately by a sharp report from the Spanish flagship. These shots went far of their mark and the only answer from the American fleet was to send up a string of flags bearing the code watchword "Remember the Maine." At the moment that the flags appeared every man aboard every ship cheered like a mad man, for this was to be their revenge. The fleet steamed on without firing a shot and soon the Spaniards stopped firing. As the fleet passed the Luneta mole, three shots were fired at it and went screaming over the fleet and fell miles beyond. At this the men on the "Concord" became impatient and fired two guns at the fort.

Again a signal was sent up to hold fire. As the fleet turned again Commodore Dewey said that

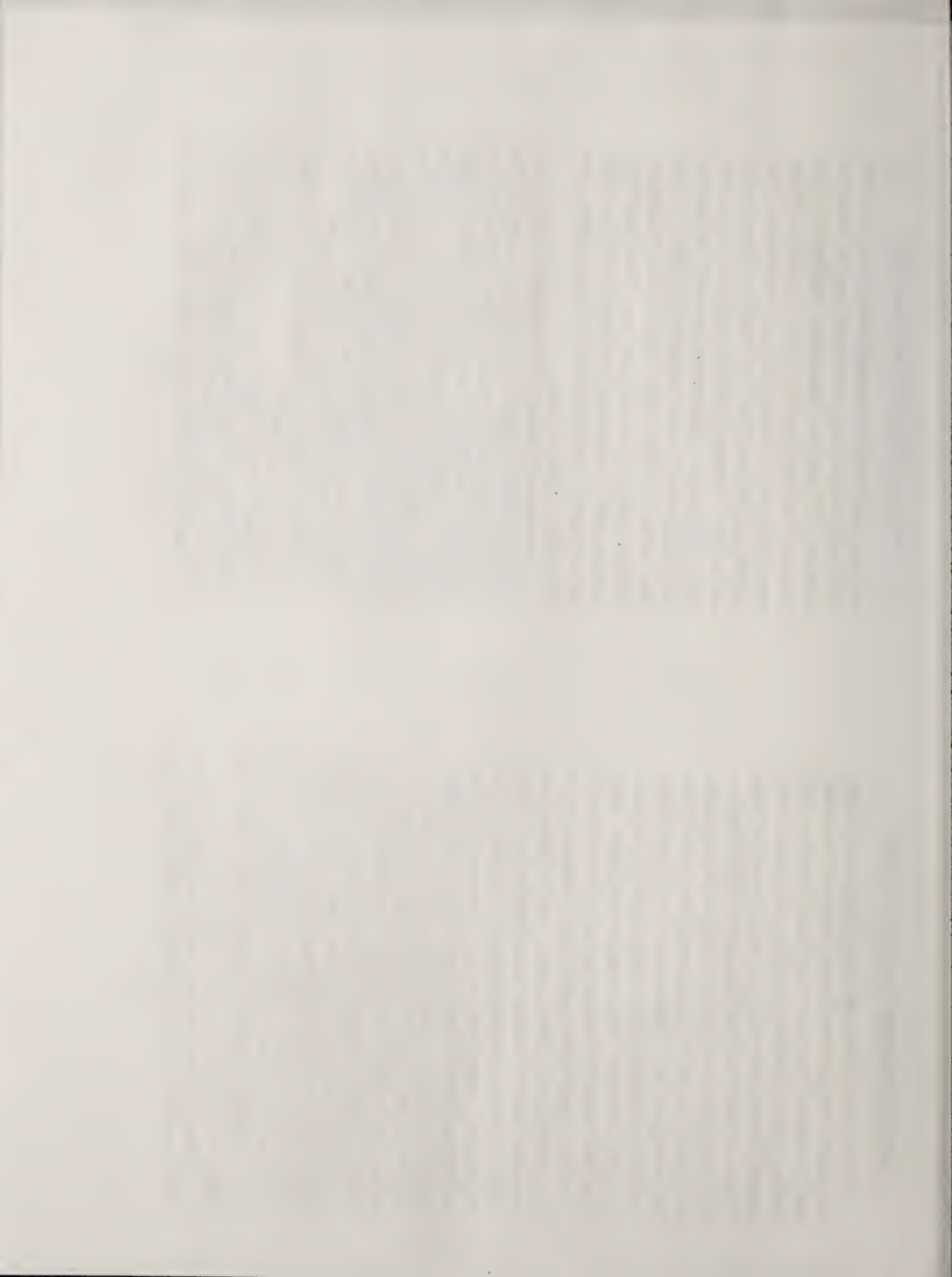
the city was very picturesque and that the blue hills back of the city reminded him of those of Vermont. When the Americans headed for the Spanish fleet the fleet and forts opened a "right merry fusilade." During all this cannonading the Americans did not fire a shot and a signal went up on the "Olympia" ordering them to hold their fire until close in. Suddenly, close off the bow of the "Baltimore," there appeared a geyser of mud and water and then right ahead of the "Raleigh" another shot up toward the sky. The Spaniards had exploded two mines. Although the mine fields before Manila were extensive this experience was the end of mine trouble.

Commodore Dewey, Commander Lamberton, Lieutenant Reese, and the navigator were on the forward bridge and Captain Gridley, although very ill, fought the entire battle in the conning tower of the "Olympia." Commodore Dewey had given Gridley permission to stay in his cabin and even advised him to, but Gridley, despite his illness, commanded his ship. With a glance at the shore Dewey turned to Lieutenant Reese and said, "About five thousand yards I should say, eh, Reese?"

"Between that and six thousand, I should think, Sir," Reese answered.

Then Dewey leaned over the railing of the bridge and called out these famous words: "When you are ready, you may fire, Gridley."

Evidently Gridley was ready at the very mo-



ment the command was given, for it had hardly been uttered when the port eight-inch gun of the forward turret started the American side of the fight with an earsplitting report. A signal was run up with the order to "Fire as convenient" and the other ships of the fleet immediately opened fire on the Spaniards. The fire of the Spaniards now turned into one unending roar and was terrific. A shell from a Spanish gun, when only a hundred feet from the bridge of the "Olympia," exploded, and pieces flew all around Dewey and his aides, but although the shot tore pieces out of the bridge and tore through the rigging all about them, not a man was even scratched.

When the fleet was within four thousand yards of the Spanish the order was given to "Open with all guns" and the command was carried out to the letter. On the return line of attack when the ships passed the Spanish batteries "one shot went clean through the 'Baltimore' without hitting a man, and, another cut the signal halyards from Lieutenant Brumby's hands." On the third turn the "Raleigh" was swept right to the bows of two Spanish cruisers by a strong inseting current and escaped uninjured after pouring a raking fire into the two cruisers. On the same turn the Spanish flagship, having suddenly got up steam, drew nearer, heading on a straight line for the American flagship "Olympia." It looked as though they intended to ram it. The order was immediately given by Dewey to "con-

centrate all possible fire on the "Reina Cristina." The result was that the Spanish ship actually shivered under the rain of shells that pounded into her hull. A shell struck the port bridge where Admiral Montojo was standing and he showed his coolness by merely walking to the other end of the bridge. The "Cristina" was soon forced to turn and make for shore, this made her a beautiful mark for shot. One of Captain Gridley's guns sent an eight-inch shell at the "Reina Cristina's" stern and the shell made a perfect bull's-eye. It shattered the "Cristina's" steering gear and seemed to drive the ship forward with a shivering motion. This shot passed on into the ship, went through the bulkheads and the engines and exploded when it reached the aft boiler. This explosion ripped up the deck of the cruiser and scattered pieces of steel and wood in all directions.

During the duel between the "Olympia" and the "Reina Cristina," two gunboats crept out from Cavite acting as torpedo boats and one headed for the supply ships while the other headed for the "Olympia." The "Petrel" was sent after the first and after a few shots the Spaniards retreated toward the shore. They grounded and while the Spaniards were running up the beach into the underbrush, the "Petrel" opened on the Spanish gunboat with her rapid-firers and blew it to pieces. The other gunboat kept right on for the "Olympia" despite the fact that the "Olympia's" secondary battery was

concentrated upon it. When within five hundred yards the machine guns in the "Olympia's" fighting tops opened on the Spaniards and this proved too much, for they turned and fled. When the ship was turned around, a shell from the "Olympia" struck her just inside the stern rail. It exploded with such force that the gunboat quickly sank beneath the surface of the water.

Meanwhile, the "Baltimore" had been directing her fire at the cruiser "Castilla" and just as the fight between the "Olympia" and the "Reina Cristina" ended, the "Castilla" burst into flames. The American fleet kept maneuvering continually without any harm being done by the Spaniards and by this time, the smoke of battle was hanging so thickly over the water, that it was difficult to distinguish a ship or fort through its enfolding curtain. It was almost impossible to see any signals that were flown on the "Olympia."

At this point, Commodore Dewey turned to an aide and asked, "What time is it, Reese?"

"Seven forty-five, Sir," answered Reese.

"Breakfast time," said Dewey with a smile, "run up the signals for 'cease firing' and 'follow me'."

When the fleet turned to steam over to the supply ship's position to give the men time to eat breakfast, the Spaniards cheered and probably thought that the battle was over, but to show how the Americans felt about that, I will give a quotation from Dewey. When the ships passed the

Luneta mole and that fort opened on them with its huge Krupp guns, Lieutenant Lamberton asked if the Americans should answer, these were Dewey's words in answer:

"Oh, no, let them amuse themselves if they will. We will have plenty of opportunity to burn powder. We haven't begun fighting yet."

When the fleet reached anchorage, Dewey immediately called all the commanders aboard the "Olympia" to report. Officer after officer reported:

"Not a ship disabled."

"Not a gun out of order."

"Not a man killed."

"Not a man injured."

This seemed impossible when compared with the Spanish losses which were quite heavy.

At first, when the fleet steamed away, the "jackies" had thought that the Commodore was giving up, and so when they learned that this was merely an intermission, during which they were to eat breakfast, they danced, shook hands with one another and went about slapping each other on the back. Although Dewey's purpose was to destroy the Spanish fleet, he did not think a short cessation of hostilities would do any harm. It was, in fact, almost necessary, for, besides the veil of smoke hanging over the harbor, the men were in need of food and drink, and were extremely warm from fighting under the blazing tropic sun.

Dewey had decided on a three hour rest and



this was to include time to make preparations for the "second round." First, all hands ate a hearty breakfast. Here was a unique situation. Aboard the American fleet the men sat and calmly ate breakfast while aboard the Spanish fleet, all was confusion and chaos. Breakfast being finished by the Americans, a general clean-up was started, the decks, guns, and men were cleaned and the ammunition rooms refilled. All the operations being finished, Commodore Dewey asked; "Everything all right, Lamberton?"

"Everything, I believe, Sir," answered the officer.

"Very well, 'call to quarters' and 'get under way,'" commanded Dewey.

At 10:45 the men were all at their posts and the fleet was off for the second round and to finish the work which they had "thus far so nobly carried on."

THE SECOND ROUND

By COLBY MABIE

HE PROGRAM for the second act was planned as accurately as was possible. The plan was to finish up the sinking of the Spanish fleet, and then take care of the forts. When the American fleet had steamed back to position, they saw that the "Cristina," the "Castilla," and the transport "Mindano" were ablaze and their crews were trying to gain control of the flames.

The condition of the "Cristina" was so bad that Admiral Montojo transferred his flag to the "Isle de Cuba." The "Baltimore," following Captain Dyer's "straight to the point" tactics, closed on the "Cristina" and when the smoke had cleared away the "Cristina" blew up. The "El Correo" was next in turn; it was sunk by the heroic little "Petrel." The "Austria" was a like victim of the "Olympia." The "General Lezo" was disabled by the "Boston," "Concord" and "Baltimore." The "Don Antonio de Ulloa" with her brave commander Robion was finally sunk by the "Olympia." As the smoke finally cleared away after this period of battle, all that could be seen was the charred

CAPTAIN CHARLES VERNON GRIDLEY

remains of the Spanish fleet. Admiral Montojo escaped to shore with a few of his officers.

After the surrender of the fleet, attention was turned to the forts. One of these forts, low down on Sangley Point, was armed with Hontorio guns; one shot from our fleet silenced the first gun in the fort, and the "Raleigh" steamed in and disabled the other.

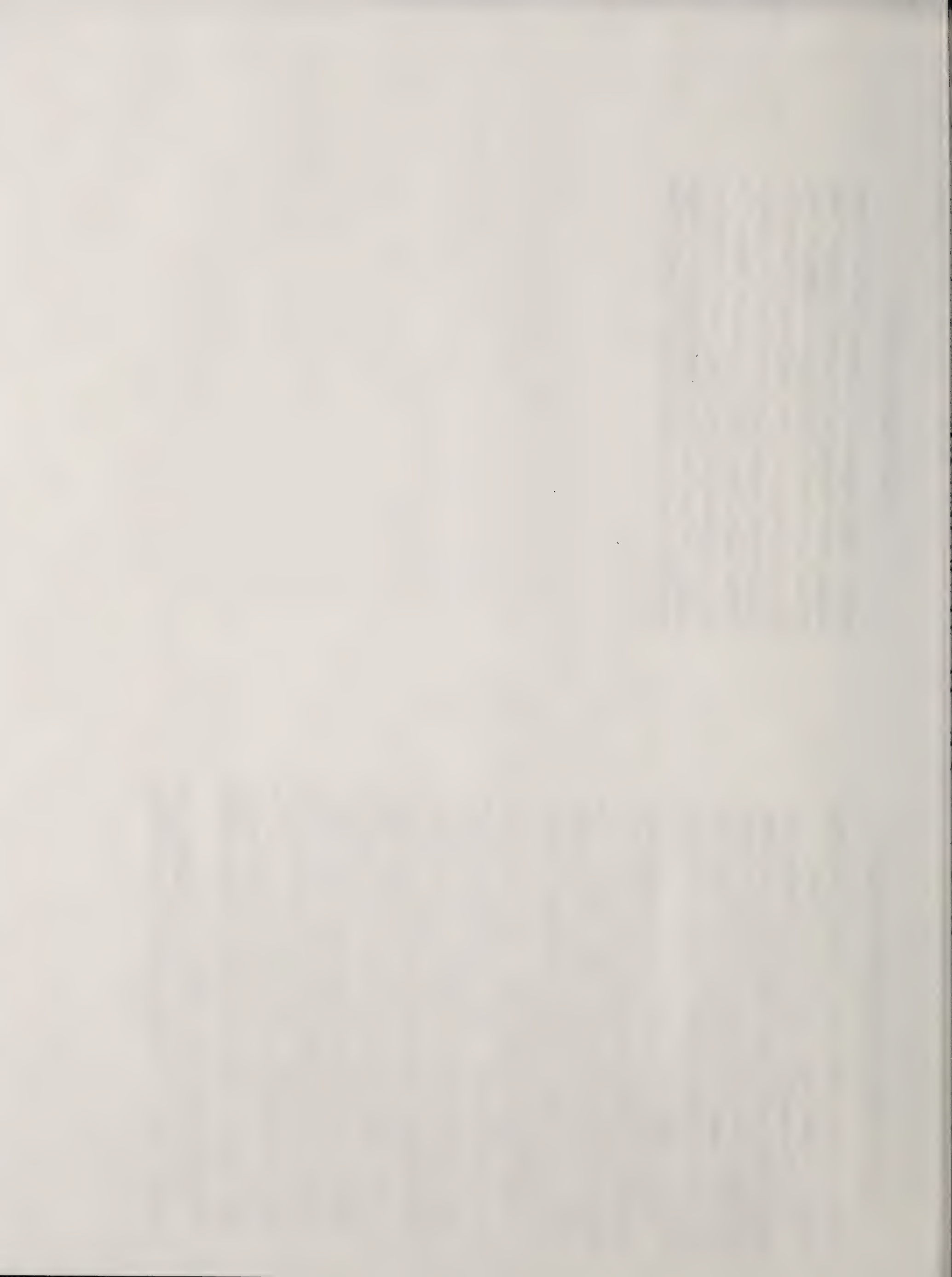
Slowly but completely the shore batteries were silenced. At 12:45 the knock-out blow was delivered. A shot from the "Olympia" landed in the powder magazine in Cavite. Following the explosion, a white flag was raised signifying the close of the Battle of Manila Bay.

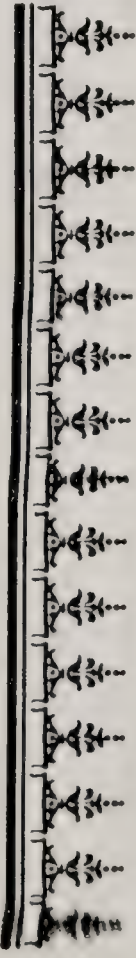
The "Petrel" was the hero of the battle and a hero after the battle. The Commodore saw three small cruisers making towards the head of Cavite Bay. The "Petrel," "Concord" and "Boston" were sent after them. The inner harbor was too shallow for the larger boats, so the "Petrel" went in alone. She opened fire on the boats and sunk one. The Spaniards on the other two boats could not understand how one little gunboat could make things so hot, so desperately hot, that they scuttled their ships and went ashore to think it over. On the way back to the fleet the "Petrel" found the supply boat "Manila"; the prize was half a million dollars and six thousand tons of coal.

In all the battle not a gun was disabled, nor a man killed in the American fleet. Only one dis-

THE SECOND ROUND

astrous thing happened. Captain Charles Vernon Gridley, commanding officer of the "Olympia" was ill the day of the battle, but was active all day. This increased his fever and directly after the battle he was rushed homeward, but died June 5, 1898 at Kobe, Japan, before he reached home. The body was taken to Hong Kong where it was cremated. He was the first American officer whose death was the direct result of the War with Spain.





THE FUNERAL SERVICES

By JEAN HOLMAN

AT SUNSET on July 13, 1898 the last sad church ceremonies of earth consigned the ashes of the gallant Captain Gridley to their last resting place. The services held at his residence in Erie were brief and simple, conducted by Right Rev. Boyd Vincent, Bishop of Ohio and cousin of Mrs. Gridley. Those assisting were Rev. F. S. Spalding and Rev. A. E. Montgomery. While uniformed bodies and veterans were forming in the respective positions assigned to them, the ashes, which had been placed in a casket covered with the national colors, were carried to the hearse by sailors from the "U.S.S. Michigan," who, armed with muskets were drawn up from the house to the curb.

The honorary pallbearers were Hamilton Perkins of Boston, Edward S. Wheeler, U.S.N. of Buffalo, William Bliss of Boston, J. E. Payne of Philadelphia, and M. H. Taylor, George P. Colt, W. H. Nicholson, and John H. Bliss, of Erie. The active pallbearers were four sailors from the "U.S.S. Haze," while eight of the crew of that vessel were an escort to the hearse.

When the solemn strains of the band were

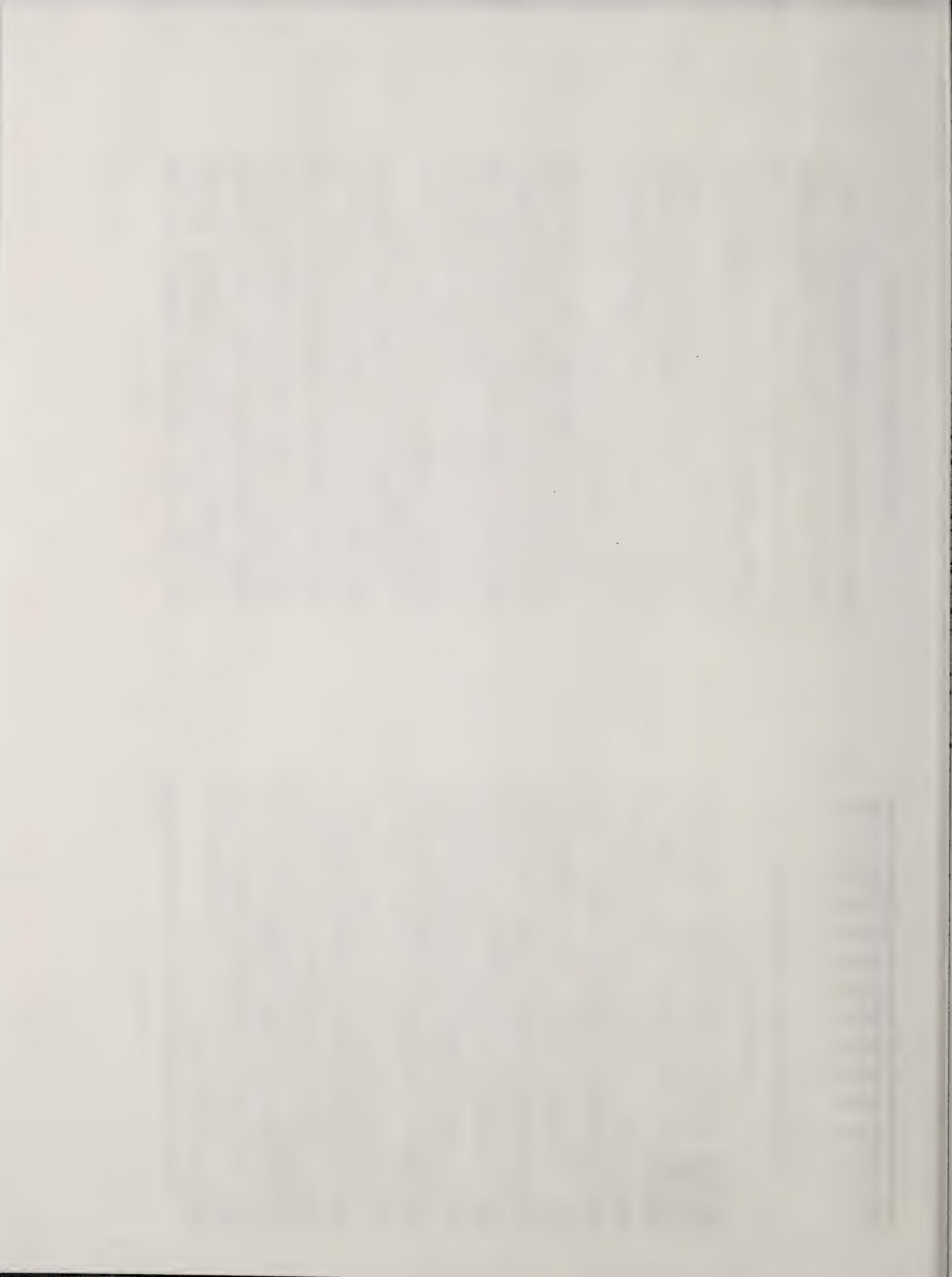
THE FUNERAL SERVICES

heard, the bells in the city hall tower and five engine houses were tolled, giving notice that the last sad march of the hero had begun. On West Sixth Street the sidewalks were crowded with reverent citizens. Almost every house and business place along the line of march had the national ensign properly draped.

The parade stretched for over a mile and the streets covered by its route had been carefully swept and sprinkled. A more beautiful thoroughfare for a large procession (especially on East Sixth Street) could not be imagined.

The police arrangements were excellent, all avenues along the route being efficiently policed. At the entrance of Lake Side Cemetery appeared the familiar stalwart forms of Erie's finest police in full dress uniforms. Chief Woods, on horseback, led the parade, and he, with Captain Henry and a cordon of patrolmen, effectively kept back the crowds during the ceremonies at the grave.

Over the lake the sun hung like a ball of fire just ready to dip its burning brim into the silent waters. Over the greensward everywhere were throngs of people who moved slowly parallel with the procession across the broad meadow until the northwestern portion of Lake Side Cemetery was reached. Here in a circle of ample size, where later a monument was erected to his honor, the grave of Captain Gridley had been prepared. This lies east and west so that the warrior's dust looks



CAPTAIN CHARLES VERNON GRIDLEY

directly toward the harbor light which marks the entrance to Presque Isle Bay, whose waters he so often sailed when on duty.

The "Michigan" bluejackets formed two parallel lines across the lot and within the boundary of their muskets were gathered the mourners, the officers of the "U.S.S. Michigan" and the clergy. The "Knights of St. John" and other uniformed societies formed in the rear of the sailors, while south of the grave were massed the delegations and representative committees from all walks of the city. Demuling's Band played softly while the casket was carried to the grave and lowered to its resting place. A pause ensued, then a choir of men's voices sang "Lead Kindly Light." With the close of the ritual there was silence for a moment, then clear on the evening air rose the notes of the bugle in the hands of musician F. J. Demuling as he blew the last call that closes a sailor's day of duty: "taps, lights out."

So passed from mortal ken all that was mortal of Charles Vernon Gridley. "He had fought the good fight; he had won the crown."

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